

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace the claims with the following amendments:

1-54. (Cancelled).

55. (Currently Amended) A cultivated robust watermelon variety producing fruit with an average fructose content of at least 60% or an average sucrose content of at least 65% of total soluble sugar; and/or an average combined fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar ~~altered sugar ratios selected from at least one of elevated fructose and elevated sucrose content, having equal or reduced total sugar content, being devoid of bitterness and having superior sweet taste characteristics compared to currently available varieties, suitable for commercial scale cultivation.~~

56. (Cancelled).

57. (Currently Amended) The watermelon variety of claim 55, wherein the average fructose content is at least 60% ~~or at least 65%~~ of the total soluble sugar.

58. (Currently Amended) The watermelon variety of claim 55, wherein the average sucrose content is at least 70% ~~or at least 75%~~ of the total soluble sugar.

59. (Currently Amended) The watermelon variety of claim 55, wherein the average combined content of fructose and sucrose is at least 90% ~~or at least 95%~~ of the total soluble sugar.

60. (Previously Presented) The variety of claim 55, wherein the variety is an inbred parent line.

61. (Currently Amended) The variety of claim 55, wherein the variety is a hybrid and the average fructose content of at least 65% or an average sucrose content of at least 70% of total soluble sugar; and/or an average combined fructose and sucrose content of at least 95% of the total soluble sugar.

62. (Previously Presented) A watermelon fruit produced from the watermelon variety of claim 55.

63. (Currently Amended) A seed of a cultivated robust watermelon variety, wherein a plant grown from the seed is [[a]] the watermelon variety of claim 55.

64. (Previously Presented) A watermelon plant, or part thereof, produced by growing the seed of claim 63.

65. (Currently Amended) The watermelon plant[[,]] or part thereof of claim 64, wherein the part thereof is a pollen grain, an ovule, or tissue culture of regenerable cells of the plant.

66. (Currently Amended) The plant or part thereof of claim 64, further comprising at wherein the plant is least one additional trait selected from the group consisting of herbicide resistant resistance, insect resistant resistance, bacterial resistant resistance to bacterial, fungal or viral disease resistant, and/or male sterile sterility and improved nutritional value.

67. (Cancelled).

68. (Cancelled).

69. (Previously Presented) The plant, or part thereof, of claim 64, wherein the plant or part thereof is transgenic and contains one or more transgenes operably linked to one or more regulatory elements.

70. (Previously Presented) The tissue culture according to claim 65, comprising cells or protoplasts from a tissue selected from the group consisting of leaves, pollen, ovules embryos, roots, root tips, anthers, flowers, fruit and seeds.

71. (Currently Amended) The tissue culture of regenerable cells of claim 70, wherein the tissue regenerates plants producing fruit with an average fructose content of at least 60% or an average sucrose content of at least 65% of total soluble sugar; and/or an average combined fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar altered sugar ratios selected from at least one of elevated fructose and elevated sucrose content, having equal or reduced total sugar content, being devoid of bitterness and having superior sweet taste characteristics compared to currently available varieties, suitable for commercial scale cultivation.

72. (Previously Presented) A watermelon plant regenerated from the tissue culture of claim 71.

73. (Withdrawn) A method for breeding a watermelon plant producing fruit with an average fructose content of at least 60% or an average sucrose content of at least 65% of total soluble sugar; and/or an average combined fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar ~~altered sugar ratios selected from at least one of elevated fructose and elevated sucrose content, having equal or reduced total sugar content, being devoid of bitterness and having superior sweet taste characteristics compared to currently available varieties and suitable for commercial scale cultivation~~, comprising the steps of:

- a. crossing at least one wild type *Citrulus* species with a *Citrulus lanatus* to produce F₁ hybrid seeds;
- b. collecting the hybrid F₁ seeds;
- c. growing plants from the F₁ seeds;
- d. pollinating the F₁ plants;
- e. collecting the hybrid seeds produced by the F₁ plants;
- f. growing plants from the seeds produced by the F₁ plants;
- g. measuring the total soluble sugar content of ripe fruit produced from the plants grown from the seeds of the F₁ plants; and
- h. selecting plants with watermelon fruit comprising an average fructose content of at least 60% or 50%; sucrose content of at least 65%; and/or fructose and sucrose content of least 90% of the total soluble sugar ~~being devoid of the bitterness of the wild type *Citrulus* species~~.

74. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, wherein the pollination in step (d) includes self pollination or back crossing with a *C. lanatus* plant.

75. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, wherein the steps of crossing and selecting are repeated at least once.

76. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 73, further comprising the step of selfing, at least once, the selected plants, and further selecting plants producing fruit comprising an average fructose content of at least 60% 50%; or sucrose content of at least 65%; or fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar being devoid of the bitterness of the wild type *Citrulus*, ~~to obtain super sweet watermelon advanced lines.~~

77. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 76, further comprising the steps of:

- a. crossing a *Citrulus* advanced line plant with a *C. lanatus* plant;
- b. selecting plants with watermelon fruits comprising an average fructose content of at least 60% 50%; or sucrose content of at least 65%; or fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar; and
- c. selfing the selected plants at least once to obtain inbred line producing fruit ~~with altered sugar ratios selected from at least one of elevated fructose and elevated sucrose content, having equal or reduced total sugar content, being devoid of bitterness and having superior sweet taste characteristics compared to currently available varieties and suitable for commercial scale cultivation.~~

78. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 77, wherein selfing is repeated 1 to 12 times.

79. (Withdrawn) A method of producing first generation hybrid seeds comprising crossing a first parent watermelon plant with a second parent watermelon plant and harvesting the resultant hybrid F₁ seeds, wherein the first and the second parent plants are inbred lines producing fruits having an average fructose content of at least 60% of total soluble sugar or an average sucrose content of at least 65% of total soluble sugar, and/or an average combined fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar with altered sugar ratios selected from at least one of elevated fructose and elevated sucrose content, having equal or reduced total sugar content, being devoid of bitterness and having superior sweet taste characteristics compared to currently available varieties, suitable for commercial scale cultivation.

80. (Withdrawn) A hybrid watermelon seed produced by the method of claim 79.

81. (Withdrawn) A hybrid watermelon plant, or parts thereof, produced by growing the seed of claim 80.

82. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a watermelon plant ~~derived from the watermelon plant of claim 64~~, comprising:

- a. crossing a first watermelon plant line with a second watermelon plant to obtain F₁ progeny seed, wherein the first watermelon plant is [[a]] the plant according to claim 64;
- b. growing the F₁ progeny seed under suitable plant growth conditions to yield an F₁ watermelon plant of the first hybrid plant; optionally;
- c. crossing the plant obtained in step (b) with itself or with a third watermelon plant to yield second progeny seeds derived from said first hybrid plant; and
- d. growing the second progeny seed under suitable plant growth conditions to yield additional watermelon plant derived of said first hybrid plant.

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 82, further comprising the step of repeating the steps of crossing the plant obtained in step (b) and growing the progeny seed at least 1 to 7 times to generate further watermelon plants.

84. (New) A watermelon plant produced by the method of claim 82.

85. (New) The watermelon plant of claim 84, wherein the average fructose content is at least 60% of the total soluble sugar.

86. (New) A watermelon plant obtainable by crossing a wild type *Citrulus* species with a *Citrulus lanatus* plant, wherein the watermelon plant comprises an average fructose content of at least 60% or an average sucrose content of at least 65% of total soluble sugar; and/or an average combined fructose and sucrose content of at least 90% of the total soluble sugar.